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Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 03653 180802Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------054134 182039Z /53
R 180623Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7896

S E C R E T TEHRAN 03653

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO DEPT. OF DEFENSE, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF,
AND USCINCEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, IR, US
SUBJ: U.S. ASSISTANCE TO IRANIAN MILITARY COMMAND, CONTROL
AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

1. U.S. DEPUTY CINCEUR GENERAL HUYSER AND I, ACCOMPANIED BY CARMISH GENERAL GAST, HAD LENGTHY AUDIENCE WITH SHAH APRIL 16. SHAH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CHIEF SCS GENERAL AZHARI. BASIC SUBJECT OF AUDIENCE WAS U.S. ASSISTANCE TO IRANIAN MILITARY COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN.

2. THIS AUDIENCE WAS CENTERPIECE OF DISCUSSIONS WHICH GENERAL HUYSER HAS BEEN HAVING THESE PAST FEW DAYS WITH SENIOR IRANIAN MILITARY WORKING WITH THIS PROJECT. HE HAS HANDLED THESE DISCUSSION SKILLFULLY AND THE IRANIANS HAVE BEEN FORTHRIGHTLY COOPERATIVE. SINCE THIS IS A SUBJECT OF GREAT POLITICAL SENSITIVITY AND FRAUGHT WITH INTER-SERVICE AS WELL AS INTER-PERSONAL RIVALRIES AMONG THE MILITARY, WE HAVE BEEN PLEASED THAT IT HAS THUS FAR PROCEEDED SMOOTHLY. THERE ARE STILL MANY POTENTIAL PITFALLS, BUT IT IS OFF TO A GOOD START.

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3. I WILL LEAVE DETAILED REPORTING ON THE SUBJECT TO GENERAL HUYSER, WHO WILL HANDLE IT IN MILITARY CHANNELS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME POLITICAL DIMENSIONS TO THE AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH WHICH I WISH TO RECORD IN THIS MESSAGE. THESE BASICALLY DERIVE FROM THE SHAH'S STATEMENT THAT HE RELIZES THE SIZE OF HIS ARMED FORCES HAS NOW GROWN TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT HE CAN NOT RPT NOT CONTROL THEM ALL FROM A SINGLE SWITCH.

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HE ALSO STATED THAT, FOR REASONS OF SECURITY, HE HAS UNTIL NOW
CARRIED MOST OF HIS PLANS IN HIS HEAD AND HAS REFRAINED FROM
COMMITTING THEM TO PAPER. HE SAID HE REALIZES THIS MAY
ALSO HAVE TO CHANGE. IN SUM, HE IS PREPARED TO DELEGATE
AUTHORITY TO A PRACTICAL DEGREE.

4. THE CHANGES WHICH THE SHAH IS PREPARED TO MAKE, AND ON
WHICH GENERAL HUYSER WILL UNDERTAKE TO ADVISE, WILL, IN ANY
EVENT, LEAVE THE COMMAND FUNCTION CLEARLY IN THE SHAH'S HANDS.
HOWEVER, HE WILL SPREAD THE CONTROL FUNCTION THROUGH FOUR
REGIONAL COMMANDS, WHICH WILL HAVE DEFINED TERRITORIAL LIMITS
AND WILL BE DESIGNATED AS "ARMIES". THESE COMMANDS WILL BE
HEADED BY GROUND FORCE OFFICERS. (GEN. AZHARI LATER INDICATED
HE WISHED CALL THEM "CORPS".)

5. THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY WILL REMAIN INTACT AND BE DESIGNATED
AS SUPPORTING FORCES, WHOSE RESOURCES WOULD BE ALLOCATED TO THE
NEW REGIONAL COMMANDS IN A MILITARY EMERGENCY IN
ACCORDANCE WITH DECISIONS TO BE MADE BY THE SHAH AS
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. HOWEVER, THE HELICOPTER FORCE WOULD
BE BROKEN UP AND ELEMENTS WOULD BE ORGANICALLY ASSIGNED
TO THE REGIONAL COMMANDS. (IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH GEN.
AZHARI, THIS WAS MODIFIED TO "ATTACHMENT" RATHER THAN "ASSIGNMENT".

6. GENERAL HUYSER ALSO PRESSED THE SHAH TO ASSIGN MORE
NAVY AND AIR FORCE PERSONNEL TO THE SUPREME COMMANDER'S
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STAFF IN ORDER TO DEVELOP MORE JOINT PLANNING FOR THE INTER-
OPERATION OF COMBINED ARMS. THE SHAH WAS SOMEWHAT NON-
COMMITTAL ON THIS POINT.

7. COMMENT: THESE BASIC DECISIONS, WHICH WILL GIVE THE
ARMY ALL FOUR SENIOR REGIONAL COMMANDS AS WELL AS CONTINUED
DOMINANCE OF THE SCS, BUT WILL LEAVE THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE
COMMANDS INTACT, WILL PROBABLY PRODUCE THE GREATEST GENERAL
MEASURE OF SATISFACTION FOR ALL CONCERNED.
THE DESIGNATION OF THE FOUR REGIONAL COMMANDERS
WILL OBVIOUSLY BE DONE VERY CAREFULLY. THEY WILL
HAVE MORE CONCENTRATED LOCAL AUTHORITY OVER BROAD
AREAS OF THE COUNTRY THAN ANY OFFICERS IN RECENT HISTORY.
WHETHER THERE WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT INTRODUCTION OF NAVY AND
AIR FORCE OFFICERS TO EFFECTIVE POSITIONS ON THE SCS AND
WHETHER GENUINE WAR PLANS WILL ACTUALLY BE COMMITTED TO PAPER
REMAIN TO BE SEEN. GENERAL HUYSER HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE
ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT BE DONE "FROM THE
BOTTOM UP" WITH THE SOUTHWEST REGION CHOSEN AS THE PROTO-
TYPE FOR DEVELOPMENT. THE SHAH HAS ACCEPTED THIS RECOM-
MENDATION. IF THESE ARRANGEMENTS WORK OUT AS PLANNED,
THERE SHOULD BE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN IRAN'S CAPABILITY

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TO MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE SOPHISTICATED MILITARY EQUIP-
MENT IT IS IN THE PROCESS OF ACQUIRING.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MILITARY PLANS, MILITARY CAPABILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEHRAN03653
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780166-0468
Format: TEL
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780442/aaaabkai.tel
Line Count: 119
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 859f8bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2926605
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. ASSISTANCE TO IRANIAN MILITARY COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
TAGS: MASS, IR, US, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMAD REZA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/859f8bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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